

AGTOURISM & DIRECT MARKETING IN SLO COUNTY



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Agricultural Tourism & Direct Marketing

Definition:

A secondary and incidental business conducted by a farmer or rancher to promote the products of an agricultural operation and generate farm income to supplement income from the primary agricultural use of the site.

Ag Policy 6: Visitor Serving and Retail Commercial Use and Facilities

a. Allow limited visitor serving and incidental retail use and facilities in agricultural areas that are beneficial to the agricultural industry and farm operators and are compatible with long-term agricultural use of the land. Such uses shall be clearly incidental and secondary to the primary agricultural use of the site and shall comply with the performance standards in the LUO.

b. Locate the visitor serving and incidental retail use off of productive agricultural lands unless there are no other feasible locations. Locate new structures where land use compatibility, circulation, and infrastructure capacity exist or can be developed compatible with agricultural uses.

Discussion

This policy recognizes the increasing need of farmers and ranchers to diversify their on-site activities from production through the marketing of their agricultural products. On-site and area-specific promotion and marketing of local agricultural products can also enhance local tourism

Implementation

Both the LUE (Table ‘O’, Allowable Uses) and LUO allow a variety of uses accessory to agricultural operations, such as a winery tasting room, a bed-and-breakfast, or a restaurant. The accessory uses must be clearly incidental and secondary to the primary agricultural use of the site and must comply with performance standards in the ordinance. The types of uses and the effectiveness of the performance standards for their establishment should be monitored over time and, if necessary, future amendments proposed that will further enhance the agricultural operations by the establishment of accessory uses.

Ag Policy 31: Recreational Use of Agricultural Lands

Encourage recreational uses on privately-owned lands on a case-by-case basis where such uses are compatible with on- and offsite agriculture and with scenic and environmentally sensitive resources.

Discussion:

The county general plan has long encouraged owners of rural properties to establish recreational opportunities on their land where it is feasible and compatible with the agricultural and rural setting. This policy further recognizes that recreational uses can be an important part of the rural setting and should be developed so they are compatible with agricultural and environmental resources.

Implementation:

Ongoing through the CEQA review of development proposals that require a discretionary land use permit, and through information provided to land owners for their voluntary use as they establish uses that are either exempt from permit requirements or need only a ministerial permit from the county.

Agricultural Tourism Land Uses

Farm Product Sales

- U-picks
- Farm Stand
- Farm Store

Value-Added Products

- Winery / Tasting Room
- Processing facilities w/ associated sales (juice, bakery, jams, nut butter, dry flowers, olive oil, fiber)

Non-Agricultural Products

- Clothing, books, kitchen items, food purchased wholesale

Commercial Experiences

- Special events – weddings, concerts
- Restaurant

Lodging

- Farm Stay
- B&B
- Camping
- Dude ranch
- Resort

Agricultural Experiences

- Farm visit
- Animal Facilities
- Paid Tours
- Hunting
- Roundup
- Farm activities (crop mazes, classes, harvest fairs)

Agricultural Tourism Land Uses Issues

Generally depend on the magnitude of the use and the number of visitors

Impacts to Agricultural Resources

- Conversion of Agricultural Soils
 - Buildings, parking, access
- Non-Ag Water Consumption
- Potential Conflicts with Adjacent Ag Production
 - Trespass, rural crime, liability

Support for agriculture

- Secondary & Incidental
 - What does this mean?
 - How should it be defined
- Appropriate uses on AG zoned land versus land zoned for commercial uses

Impacts to Community & Neighborhood

- Traffic
- Water Use
- Fire Danger
- Parking & Dust
- Noise
- Rural Community Character
- Air Quality